Claims

1. A method for sharing network access capacities between a master service provider, comprising at least one point of presence, and a client service provider, said method
5   comprising the steps of:

- upon reception of an access request, including at least a subscriber identifier, a service provider identifier and a password, at said at least one point of presence:

- determining, according to said service provider
10   identifier, if said access request comes from a subscriber of said master service provider or from a subscriber of said client service provider, said access request being rejected otherwise;

- if said access request comes from a subscriber of
15   said master service provider,

- determining, using said subscriber identifier and said password, if said subscriber is authorized to establish a connection; and,

- if said subscriber is authorized, establishing a
20   connection, else, rejecting said access request;

- else, if said access request comes from a subscriber of said client service provider,

- determining if a new connection may be established for a subscriber of said client service provider;
25   and,

- if a new connection may be established, sending an authorization request, comprising at least said subscriber identifier and said password, to said client service provider, else, rejecting said access request;

- upon reception of an authorization acknowledgment, comprising said subscriber identifier, from said client service provider:

    - if said subscriber is authorized, establishing a

5   connection

    - else, rejecting said access request.

2. The method according to claim 1 further comprising the step of replacing said subscriber identifier and said password by a virtual subscriber identifier and a virtual

10   password, associated to said service provider identifier, when said access request comes from a subscriber of said client service provider, before determining if a new connection may be established for a subscriber of said client service provider.

15   3. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of determining a duration of the connections established by subscribers of said client service provider.

4. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of determining a number of simultaneous connections established

20   by subscribers of said client service provider.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein said step of determining if a new connection may be established for a subscriber of said client service provider is based upon a number of ports allocated to said client service provider.

25   6. The method of claim 1 wherein said step of determining if a new connection may be established for a subscriber of said client service provider is based upon a connection time threshold associated with said client service provider.

7. The method of claim 1 implemented in a RADIUS proxy, using RADIUS protocol.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein said service provider identifier is a realm.

5   9. An apparatus comprising means adapted for carrying out the method according to claim 1.

10. A computer-like readable medium comprising instructions for carrying out the method according to claim 1.